

b.) Amendments to the claims:

I claim:

Claim 1 (canceled).

Claim 2 (canceled).

Claims 3 and 4 (canceled).

5 (previously presented):        A trivet comprising a body formed of thermal insulating material having at least one opening extending therethrough, said opening being defined by a wall having a height corresponding to the thickness of said body at said opening, said opening being encircled by an upstanding reinforcing flange having an internal bore extending in prolongation of said wall, means for coupling said body to another article, said coupling means comprising a first retainer having a stem of such size as to extend through said opening, and an enlargement at opposite ends of said stem, each said enlargement being of such size as to extend beyond said opening and overlie said body adjacent said opening, at least one of said enlargements being sufficiently flexible as to enable said one of said enlargements to be deformed and pass through said opening.

6 (original):    A trivet according to claim 5 including a strap joined at one end thereof to said retainer and being of such length as to extend beyond an edge of said body.

7 (previously presented)    A trivet according to claim 6 wherein said strap has an opposite end joined to a second retainer corresponding to said first retainer.

8 (previously presented): A trivet comprising a first body member and a second body member each of which is formed of thermal insulating material

having opposite surfaces; and means coupling said first body member and said second body member to one another, said coupling means comprising a flexible strap, having opposite ends joined to first and second retainers, each said retainer corresponding in construction and comprising a stem having a length at least as great as the thickness of each said body member, each said stem having at opposite ends thereof an enlargement extending axially and laterally beyond said stem, each said body member having an opening therein of such size as snugly to accommodate one of said stems, each said enlargement being of such size as to extend axially and laterally beyond said opening a distance to overlies an adjacent portion of one of said surfaces of said body member when said stem is within one of said openings, at least one of said enlargements being sufficiently deformable as to enable said one of said enlargements to pass through either of said openings, said strap being of such length as to enable said strap to span said first and second body members when the stem of one of said retainers is accommodated in one of said openings.

9 (original): The trivet according to claim 8 wherein the enlargement at one end of each said stem is formed by a part of said strap.

10 (original): The trivet according to claim 8 wherein each said body member has a plurality of spaced projections of substantially uniform height extending from one surface thereof, thereby enabling a space to exist between said one surface and an article on which said body member is supported.

11 (original): The trivet according to claim 8 including a plurality of spaced projections extending from opposite surfaces of each said body member.

12 (original): The trivet according to claim 8 including a reinforcing flange encircling said opening in each said body member and projecting beyond at least one surface of the associated body member.

13 (original): The trivet according to claim 12 wherein each said opening has a wall and each said flange has a bore, said wall and said bore having substantially the same cross-sectional area.

14 (original): The trivet according to claim 13 wherein said wall and said bore are smooth.

15 (original): The trivet according to claim 8 wherein each said stem is hollow.

16 (previously presented): A trivet comprising a body member formed of thermal insulating material, said body member having a plurality of uniform openings therein spaced from one another, each of said openings extending completely through said body member and being defined by a wall adjacent an edge of said body member, each said opening being encircled by a reinforcing flange projecting beyond at least one surface of said body member, each said flange having a bore corresponding in cross-sectional area to that of each said opening; and coupling means for coupling said body member to another article having an opening therein corresponding in cross-sectional area to that of each said opening, said coupling means comprising a retainer having a stem of such size as to be accommodated in any selected one of said openings and terminating at one end in an enlargement of such size as to overlie a portion of said body member adjacent said selected one of said openings, said coupling means also comprising a strap having opposite ends one of which is joined to said stem

and encircles an opposite end of said stem, said one end of said strap extending beyond said opposite end of said stem a distance beyond that edge of said body member adjacent said selected opening, said strap having at the opposite end thereof a second retainer corresponding to said first retainer.

17 (original): The trivet according to claim 16 including a plurality of spaced apart, substantially uniform height projections extending in the same direction beyond one surface of said body member.

18 (original): The trivet according to claim 16 including a plurality of spaced apart projections extending beyond opposite surfaces of said body member, all of the projections at one side of said body member extending in the same direction.